

Wakefield, MA – WAKEFIELD EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION is one of 100 local nonprofits to receive grants of \$100,000 each through Cummings Foundation's '*\$100K for 100*' program. The Wakefield-based organization was chosen from a total of 479 applicants during a competitive review process.

Wakefield Educational Foundation (WEF) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit community-based organization dedicated to supporting and enhancing the excellence in educational experience offered to all students in the Wakefield Public School System. Run by volunteer Wakefield residents, we are supported by donations from local businesses, civic organizations and individuals in our community and also by fundraisers that we conduct throughout the school year.

Elizabeth Russell, Co-president of WEF, came across the Cummings Foundation '*\$100K for 100*' grants last fall and consulted with Wakefield Superintendent Dr. Kim Smith, asking if it might be worth applying for a project for the Wakefield Public School System. Brendan Kent, K-12 Director of Athletics, Health and Wellness immediately expressed interest in partnering with WEF to apply for a fitness grant in which he would look to purchase, replace or improve outdoor fitness equipment at our K-12 schools. His vision is to enhance student and community wellness with the opportunity to utilize quality fitness equipment as part of our schools' grounds and playgrounds. Elizabeth did so much of the foundational work to get our application underway, Brendan diligently worked with her to research and write the specifics. An elated Superintendent Dr. Kim Smith recently notified members of the Wakefield School Committee in an email stating "Elizabeth was notified this week that we have been awarded a \$100,000 Cummings Foundation Grant! I want to thank Elizabeth and Brendan for their vision, hard work and enthusiasm – the Wakefield Public Schools and community will benefit so much from this project!"

The '*\$100K for 100*' program supports nonprofits that are not only based in but also primarily serve Middlesex, Essex and Suffolk counties. This year, the program is benefiting 41 different cities and towns within the Commonwealth.

Through this place-based initiative, Cummings Foundation aims to give back in the area where it owns commercial buildings, all of which are managed, at no cost to the Foundation, by its affiliate Cummings Properties. Founded in 1970 by Bill Cummings of Winchester, the Woburn-based commercial real estate firm leases and manages more than 10 million square feet of space, the majority of which exclusively benefits the Foundation.

"We admire and very much appreciate the important work that nonprofit organizations like Wakefield Educational Foundation are doing in the local communities where our colleagues and clients live and work," said Joel Swets, Cummings Foundation's executive director. "We are delighted to support their efforts."

This year's diverse group of grant recipients represents a wide variety of causes, including education, homelessness prevention, elder services, health care and food insecurity. Most of the grants will be paid over two to five years. The complete list of 100 grant winners is available at www.CummingsFoundation.org.

WEF provides grants to the Wakefield Public Schools for innovative and creative programs that are unable to be funded in the current year's school district budget. Teachers, school staff, principals and PTO's are all eligible to apply for grants. Grants are awarded to those individuals and groups whose proposals best exemplify initiatives that impact a broad number of students, have long term creative and innovative educational benefits within our school system and contribute to educational excellence now and in the future within Wakefield Public Schools. WEF recently awarded over \$28,000 during the last school year to PTO and staff members at the following schools: Doyle Early Childhood Center, Walton, Greenwood, Woodville, Dolbeare, Galvin Middle School, Wakefield Memorial High School and POST Grad Program. Visit www.wakefieldeducationalfoundation.org to see detailed grant information.

Elizabeth Russell and Brendan Kent joined approximately 300 other guests at a June 9 reception at TradeCenter 128 in Woburn to celebrate the \$10 million infusion into Grater Boston's nonprofit sector. With the conclusion of this grant cycle, Cummings Foundation has now awarded more than \$140 million to local nonprofits alone.

Woburn-based Cummings Foundation, Inc. was established in 1986 by Joyce and Bill Cummings of Winchester. With assets exceeding \$1 billion, it is one of the largest foundations in New England. The Foundation directly operates its own charitable subsidiaries, including two New Horizons retirement communities in Marlborough and Woburn. Its largest single commitment to date was \$50 million to Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine at Tufts University. Additional information is available at www.CummingsFoundation.org.



Pictured with current WEF Directors are (left to right): Wakefield Public Schools Superintendent Dr. Kim Smith, Chris Boulter, K-12 Director of Athletics, Health & Wellness Brendan Kent, WEF Co-president Elizabeth Russell, Gayle Wettach, Sue Worden and Erin Colliton.